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## Epidemic in Germany has caused a previously unknown bacterium is a mutant O104:H4

World Health Organization (WHO) said that the strain of enterohaemorrhagic Escherichia coli that has infected the Europeans, is a fundamentally new organism with which medicine has not previously encountered.

According to preliminary results of genetic studies, strain O104: H4 is a mutated form of the two different bacteria Escherichia coli. This explains why such a rapid spread of infection among residents of European countries, as well as its danger to human life.

Expert on food safety, WHO Hilda Cruz believes that the new strain is "more contagious and more toxic in comparison to the bacteria that inspired it.

The bacterium is particularly "survivability. " Freely bypassing the acid environment of the stomach, she settles on the walls of the intestines, producing poisonous to toxins, and doctors still have little to counter the ravages of

this wand. The consequences may be the saddest: the destruction of red blood cells to kidney failure.



According to the epidemiological observations, infection with E. coli O104: H4 is often complicated by hemolytic uremic syndrome, which is fraught with acute renal failure, central nervous system and poses a threat to life. The syndrome can cause stroke, seizures and coma.

To date, the epidemic caused by EGKP infection, which began in northern Germany, was struck by more than 1,5 thousand people, 17 of whom died. Almost 500 people infected develop HUS. The cases were brought from Germany, registered in the U.S., Sweden, Denmark, Holland and Britain and other countries, their number continues to grow.

The source of infection remains unknown. It was reported that E. coli was found in imported from Spain cucumbers, but laboratory tests have shown that it is a different strain. Nevertheless, many countries suspended the import of vegetables from the European Union.

Scientists can not yet explain why the bacterium was so virulent. EU officials pointed to some fundamental differences of the current outbreak: cases among more than two thirds are women, and among the most seriously ill patients is very large proportion of adults in young and middle aged.

Typical symptoms - bloody diarrhea, fever and vomiting. They add a speech disorder and seizures.



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